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LETTER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY SUBMITTING THE REPORT OF THE AUDITOR.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
Richmond, Va., Sept. 5, 1862.

HON. THOS. S. BOCOCK,

Speaker House of Representatives, C. S. A.:

SIR: In response to a resolution of the House of Representatives, adopted August 26th, 1862, asking for the number of soldier and other claims on file in the Second Auditor's office for adjustment, the length of time they have been on file, and the reason they have not been earlier acted on, I have the honor to enclose herewith a report from the Second Auditor, giving the desired information. I have to state, in addition, that the full complement of clerks allowed by law has not hitherto been made for two reasons: First—Because the absence of papers, as stated by the Auditor, would prevent their discharging their duties; and, secondly—that until the present week, sufficient office accommodation could not be procured for the use of this Bureau.

Respectfully,
C. G. MEMMINGER,
Secretary of the Treasury.

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REPORT OF THE SECOND AUDITOR.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, C. S.,
SECOND AUDITOR'S OFFICE,
September 3d, 1862.

Hon. THOS. S. BOCOCK,
Speaker House of Representatives:

SIR: I have been furnished by the Clerk of the House of Representatives with a copy of a resolution of said House, of August 26th, as follows:

"*Resolved*, That the Second Auditor be required to report to this House, at as early a day as practicable, the number of soldier and other claims on file in his office for adjustment, the length of time they have been on file, and the reason they have not been earlier acted upon."

In compliance with the above call, I have the honor to state that the number of claims for arrears of pay due deceased soldiers "on file in this office for adjustment" (unsettled) is 2,900. As to the "length of time they have been on file," it would be impossible to state precisely, without preparing a minute statement in detail, showing the date at which each case was filed. They have come in daily since 1st January last up to the present day; a very few cases, still unsettled, running back so far as the first-named date. "The reasons these claims have not been acted upon" are:

1st—The passage of An Act of Congress, approved February 15, 1862, which was construed as intending "to take the settlement of soldiers' claims from the Auditor, and devolve it upon the Quartermasters of the respective regiments. Thus their examination and settlement was suspended in this office, until, at my suggestion, the law was submitted to the Attorney General, who, on the 9th of May, 1862, communicated his opinion, that said act did not intend to dispense with an audit by the proper Auditing Office prior to payment by the Pay Department of the Army, as directed by the 2d section, and they were again proceeded with.

2d—The removal from this city in June last, by the Adjutant and Quartermaster Generals, because of the proximity of the enemy, of the muster and pay-rolls, to which daily reference was indispensable in making settlements of these claims, which was, therefore, suspended during the absence of those records, and further hindrance was experienced by the packing up in boxes, made expressly for the pur-

pose, of all the records, books and papers of this office, (except a few in daily use) ready to be moved at a moment's notice to a place of security, in case the safety of the city should have been seriously endangered by the presence of the enemy.

3d—The failure in many instances of captains to send in their rolls to the proper department, arising partly, I presume, from the constant movement of troops and casualties of service.

4th—The want of sufficient clerical force to bring up arrears arising as before stated, and to keep pace with the immensely increasing current influx of these claims. I may remark that a large portion of these claims, thus reported as remaining unsettled, have been regularly taken up and examined, but have been suspended and laid aside, for want of necessary proof, evidence of service, etc.

The number of claims, other than deceased soldiers, "on file in this office for adjustment," (comprising claims of all kinds growing out of the war, but principally for supplies furnished) is 97, of which there have been examined and suspended for further proof 30, leaving 67, which remain unexamined, and of which nearly all were received in the last month, August.

This statement does not include claims of the State of South Carolina, under the act of December 11th, 1861, a portion of which remains unsettled; or of the States of Mississippi and Louisiana, under the act of August 30th, 1861, for which there has been no appropriation by Congress.

I beg leave respectfully in conclusion to state that the force of this office is now, and always has been, greatly inadequate to the public wants, and most earnestly to suggest the absolute necessity of its being at once heavily increased, in order that the public accounts and claims may be properly disposed of. One hundred intelligent, industrious accountants is the *minimum* number that would be sufficient for the purpose.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

W. H. S. TAYLOR,

Auditor.

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